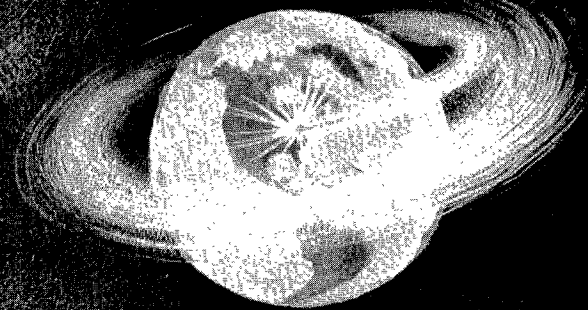


REVIEW and Herald



June 8, 1967



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HARRY ANDERSON, ARTIST

By evidences that have stood the test of time, God confirmed the presence of the prophetic gift in the remnant church, in the person of Ellen G. White.

[Elder White, as a guest instructor at Andrews University, in his course Prophetic Guidance devotes some time to the testing of the claims of prophets, true and false, and in so doing frequently refers to experiences in our own history. At our request he has drawn this material together for Review readers. This will appear in a series of four articles.—Editor.]

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS believe in spiritual gifts. They believe in the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit in the church. They believe that the church today may expect the Spirit to manifest Himself even as in apostolic times and in the days of ancient Israel.

Spiritual gifts are of many varieties. The apostle Paul lists some of them in 1 Corinthians 12:28: "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

One of the spiritual gifts is the gift of prophecy. From ancient times, prophets have been an important medium of communication between God and man (Heb. 1:1).

Prophets, True and False—1

A People Sensitive to God's Special Leading

By ARTHUR L. WHITE

Secretary, Ellen G. White Estate

These dedicated instruments "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

Since our beginning days, we as Seventh-day Adventists have been particularly sensitive to God's special leadings. We have believed that God may speak through selected messengers today. Indeed, we believe there is convincing evidence that He has done so in these days through Ellen G. White, "by the testimonies of His Spirit" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 661).

George I. Butler, president of the General Conference, once wrote:

We firmly believe the visions of Mrs. White are a genuine manifestation of spiritual gifts. . . . When we have heeded them, we have prospered; when we have slighted them, we have suffered a great loss. —*Review and Herald* Supplement, Aug. 14, 1883, pp. 11, 12.

As the recurring November birthdays added years to Ellen White's life and it became clear that she would probably rest in the grave before the Lord should come, our people wondered—What of the future? There had not been a time when Seventh-day Adventists had not had a prophet in their midst. Would God lay His Spirit on another as He had on Ellen White? Or would the church be left without a living prophet in its midst? When asked, she would at times

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classified as Cambrian. At this site I have collected specimens several times, and have been impressed each time with the vast numbers and the good state of preservation. Frequently a thin film of carbonaceous material is seen covering the impression of the animal on a freshly exposed slab.

Many other sea animals have been found in Burgess Shale. The fine grain of the shale is ideal for preserving the details. Even soft bodies and internal organs have left their impressions. Perhaps most notable is the delicate impression of a jellyfish. Obviously, animals such as this would require sudden covering to prevent disintegration. Sediments on the floors of modern oceans are thoroughly reworked by burrowing worms, shells, et cetera. An impression on the sea bottom would be completely obliterated long before sedimentation under present conditions could cover it. Burial must have been quick, and it must have killed all organisms that would stir up the mud and obliterate impressions.

Delicate Preservation

The delicate points and ribs of sea shells, tiny bones of fish, small appendages of crustaceans, textured details of echinoderms, et cetera, are so frequently seen among fossils that one must conclude that there was no opportunity for abrasion by sand and there was no time for decay and disintegration. Francis gives this description of the remarkable Geiseltal lignite deposits in Germany: "Here also is a complete mixture of plants, insects, and animals from all the climatic zones of the earth that are capable of supporting life. In some cases leaves have been deposited and preserved in a fresh condition, the chlorophyll being still green, so that the 'green layer' is used as a marker during excavations. Among the insects present are beautifully colored tropical beetles, with soft parts of the body, including the contents of the intestines, preserved intact. Normally such materials decay or change in color within a few hours of death, so that preservation by inclusion in an aseptic medium must have been sudden and complete."⁴

The veins of the leaves, butterfly wings, caterpillars, even the hairs and bristles on the caterpillars, are all perfectly preserved. In certain areas of these deposits, bones and coprolites, in huge collections, give the impression of a burial ground.

The beautiful and detailed preservation of fossils is becoming more apparent as techniques are perfected. Wetzel describes microfossils in Cre-

taceous flints.⁵ A number of kinds of one-celled organisms are represented, including forms without hard body coverings. One specimen illustrated in Wetzel's paper still shows the hair-like flagellum. It is a member of the class Mastigophora (Flagellata), genus *Ophiobolus*, and is only about 30 microns long. The necessity for speedy preservation of such a specimen is obvious. Other delicate fossil protozoan specimens in astonishing detail are described.

According to Newell, G. Arthur Cooper of the U.S. National Museum has been able to obtain, by working with dilute acids, great numbers of delicately preserved fossils from the Glass Mountains of Texas: "From 30 tons of Permian limestone . . . he [Cooper] has extracted three million individual invertebrate fossils, almost all of which are exquisitely preserved. . . . A single control block of limestone weighing one hundred and eighty-six pounds yielded ten thousand excellent specimens of invertebrates, including Foraminifera, brachiopods, bryozoans, gastropods, and pelecypods."⁶

A good illustration of the rapid burial necessary to preserve delicate structure is provided by research done recently by Zangerl and Richardson.⁷ In attempting to evaluate the rate of burial of fish and other organisms now present as fossils in the Pennsylvanian black shales of Indiana, they placed dead fish in wire cages and dropped them into the black muds at the bottom of several Louisiana lagoons or bayous. These black muds are thought to resemble the sediments from which the dark shales were derived. To the

great surprise of the investigators, fish weighing from one-half to three-fourths pound were found to have all the soft parts reduced and all the bones completely unattached in six and one-half days! Decay to the state of complete dismemberment apparently occurs at great speed; perhaps in less time than indicated above, since none were checked before six and one-half days. Delicate fossil fish showing every minute ray and bone in position are common and must represent a burial within hours of death, if this experiment is a valid indication.

The most reasonable explanation for the features of sediments and fossils listed in this article is one based on catastrophism. The Genesis flood is the most obvious cause of catastrophe. Believers in a literal universal flood as recorded in Genesis may support their beliefs with information certainly no less scientific than that used by most geologists to uphold the theory of uniformity. Next week the great coal deposits of the world will be examined for evidences of a flooding of the world by water.

(Concluded next week)

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- ² *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 77.
- ³ H. Miller, *The Old Red Sandstone*, 1860, p. 221.
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- ⁵ Otto Wetzel, "Résumé of Microfossils From Upper Cretaceous Flints and Chalks of Europe," *Journal of Paleontology*, 27:800-804.
- ⁶ N. D. Newell, "The Nature of the Fossil Record," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 103 (2):264-285.
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SENSITIVE TO GOD'S LEADING

(Continued from page 1)

pick up her Bible and some of her books and declare, "Here is light which will take the people through to the kingdom." To one of our workers in 1907 she wrote:

Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 55.

But what the future held in store with respect to a prophet in our midst was not revealed to Mrs. White.

When in 1905 a Seventh-day Adventist sister in an overseas field laid claim to having had visions that led

her to give directions to various individuals, Ellen White wrote:

The word given me by the Lord during the past night is that God does not direct His people to look to this sister for counsel. If we should encourage this sister in the work she thinks she is called to do and in the message she bears, much confusion would be caused. . . .

The light given me regarding this case is that should this sister be encouraged to think that she has been given messages for others, the result would be disastrous, and the sister would be in danger of losing her own soul.

My message to this sister is, Walk humbly with God, and look to Him for yourself. God has not given you the work of pointing out the duty of others; but you can be a helper if you are a sincere Christian, seeking to encourage others, and not claiming supernatural revelations.—*Ibid.*, book 2, pp. 97, 98.

Doubtless Mrs. White's mind went

back a decade to the experience of Anna Phillips, an unmarried woman in our midst at Battle Creek at a time when Ellen White was in Australia. Anna Phillips claimed that visions were given to her and that she had the gift of prophecy. "Testimonies" were written to various church members in Battle Creek, some of these touching on the personal experience of husbands and wives. There was an earnest call for purity of life, with teachings that went beyond the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Some messages were directed to the leaders of the church. Elder A. T. Jones fully accepted her claims and assumed the responsibility of presenting her messages to the church.

In these messages she related what she "saw," often using the term as she described the views that passed before her. In some instances she told of how the "angel caused her to look," and she described what she saw.

Her first message called attention to the shortness of time and the need of a thorough preparation for the coming of Jesus. A large work was to be done quickly.

In warning testimonies sent by Ellen G. White to Elder Jones and others in Battle Creek—one of which was so providentially timed that it carried convincing evidences—the true nature of the work of Anna Phillips was unmasked. The counsel of Ellen White helped Elder Jones to see his mistake and led Anna Phillips to examine her experience. She repudiated the "visions," brought her life into harmony with the teachings of God's Word and the Spirit of Prophecy counsels, and became a trusted, fruitful Bible instructor.

Much of the counsel given by Ellen White in this case may be read in *Selected Messages*, book 2, pages 85-95.

Certain facts stand out as beacons to alert us to the genuineness of the experience of others who may claim to have visions:

Much in Harmony With the Message but Just a Little Error

I know that we are living very near the close of this earth's history; startling events are preparing for development. I am fully in harmony with you in your work when you present the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the foundation of our faith. Satan is an artful foe, and he will work where he is by many least expected.

Do not belittle the work by mingling with it productions that you have no positive evidence are from the Lord of life and glory. . . . Do you not think I know something about these matters? All along our pathway, to the heavenly Canaan we see many souls that have made shipwreck of faith, and in their false movements have led others astray through the supposition that they were led of God in special revelations. I have had to write many, many pages to correct these errors.

I have been burdened and oppressed night

after night, unable to sleep because of the agony of my soul for God's heritage. His people, who are in danger of being misled. *Many things in these visions and dreams seem to be all straight, a repetition of that which has been in the field for many years; but soon they introduce a jot here, a tittle of error there, just a little seed which takes root and flourishes, and many are defiled therewith.*

Oh, I wish that we had far greater wisdom in all things than we now have! One thing every worker in the vineyard of the Lord must learn, that is, to practice the prayer of Christ, to move as one in Christ Jesus. Jesus prayed that His disciples might be one, as He is one with the Father. The enemy is at work, to divide, to scatter. Now as never before he will make determined efforts to scatter our forces.—*Ibid.*, pp. 85-87. (Italics supplied.)

The "Mingling of the Sublime and the Ridiculous"

I have received from God the warning which I now send to you. Anna Phillips should not have been given the encouragement she has had; it has been a great injury to her—fastened her in a deception. I am sorry that any of our brethren and sisters are ready to take up with these supposed revelations, and imagine they see in them the divine credentials. These things are not of the right character to accomplish the work essential for this time. *Childish figures and illustrations are employed in describing sacred, heavenly things, and there is a mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous.* While the work has an appearance of great sanctity, it is calculated to ensnare and mislead souls. . . .

Various things will appear claiming to be revelations from God, but which flow from the imagination of a conceited and deceived mind. We had to meet these things in our early experience. There were youth and children as well as those of mature age who claimed to be led and taught of God, having a special message to declare. They were springing up on every side, having the truth on some points, and error upon other points. For years the message from God came to me, "Believe them not, for they lead into false paths. God hath not sent them."—*Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90. (Italics supplied.)

Teachings Which Lead to Extremes and Wrong Actions

As the report has been quite widely circulated that Sister White has endorsed what has been written and circulated as revelations from God to Miss Anna Phillips, I feel that it is my duty to speak. I have not endorsed these productions. Warnings have been given to me in reference to them, that they will most certainly mislead. Woven in them will be statements that will lead to extremes, and to wrong actions on the part of those who accept them. It would be well for our brethren and sisters to move more cautiously, in accordance with the light given them. They should test these so-called visions before accepting them, and presenting them in connection with the light God has given me.—*Ibid.*, p. 90.

One significant point made by Ellen White was that the fact that nothing objectionable had been discovered in the teachings of Anna Phillips did not constitute a sound basis for accepting them:

The great wonder to me is that our brethren should accept these writings because they could see nothing objectionable in them. Why did they not consider what there is in them that is of a character to be endorsed and sent

forth with the power of influence which gives them their force? . . .

You seem to think I should be able to point out just where the particularly objectionable sentiments lie. There is nothing so very apparent in that which has been written; you have been able to discover nothing objectionable; but this is no reason for using these writings as you have done. Your course in this matter is decidedly objectionable. Is it necessary that you should discern at once something that would produce harm to the people of God, to make you cautious? If nothing of this kind appears, is this a sufficient reason for you to set your endorsement to these writings? . . .

Do not spread abroad writings of this character without more consideration and deep insight as to the after consequences of your course of action. . . .

Fanaticism will appear in the very midst of us. Deceptions will come, and of such a character that if it were possible they would mislead the very elect.—*Ibid.*, pp. 94, 95. (Italics supplied.)

Others Claiming Special Illumination

Again and again in the later years of her life, Ellen White recounted the many times the great adversary had attempted to mislead the Seventh-day Adventist Church through spurious visions and fanatical excitement. Some of these statements will be found in *Selected Messages*, book 2, pages 41-100.

When in 1908 an Adventist couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Makin, called on Mrs. White to solicit her support in their unusual experiences, she carefully listened. "They seemed to be honesthearted people," she commented, but "as this brother and his wife outlined their experiences, which they claim have come to them as the result of receiving the Holy Ghost with apostolic power, it seemed to be a facsimile of that which we were called to meet and correct in our early experience."—*Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42.

When Brother Makin volunteered the possibility of a demonstration which might enable Ellen White to determine the genuineness of their experiences she told them that to this she could not consent "because I have been instructed that when one offers to exhibit these peculiar manifestations, this is a decided evidence that it is not the work of God."

The various experiences through which the messenger of the Lord passed relating to claims to special enlightenment through vision or the special leading of the Spirit of God, and the many counsels given in meeting these situations are of very practical value to the church today. Ellen G. White in 1905 sounded this warning:

There will be those who will claim to have visions. When God gives you clear evidence that the vision is from Him, you may accept it, but do not accept it on any other evidence; for people are going to be led more and more astray in foreign countries and in America.—*Ibid.*, p. 72.

(Continued next week)

When Mrs. White Was Gone

By ARTHUR L. WHITE

WHILE walking from her bedroom to her study on Sabbath morning, February 13, 1915, Ellen G. White fell and broke her hip. She was 87 years of age. While the pace of her work during the preceding months had slackened, this brought her active labors to a close. One vision was given to her after her accident, on the night of March 3. (See *Messages to Young People*, pp. 287-289.) On Friday afternoon, July 16, five months after the accident, the messenger of the Lord quietly passed to her rest.

It is of interest to note that on the night of January 21 an alleged vision was given to a German Seventh-day Adventist soldier, a J. Wieck, confined to a prison cell in his homeland for his refusal to accept required vaccination. Of this he wrote:

On the night of January 21, 1915, I saw the following pictures in consecutive order: I proclaimed wherever I was that the end of all things had come. . . . Then I was asked, "How long will you preach these words?" I hesitated to answer but a voice cried loudly:

"Until the stone fruits [cherries, plums, etc.] bloom." . . .

It is clear to every thinking man that a terrible pestilence must sweep over . . . and at that time the separation [in the church] takes place and we are at the end of probation.—Letter of R. R. Ruhling to E. D. Dick, Sept. 18, 1940; White Estate Document File # 350b.

Mr. Wieck embodied the vision in an article that he sent to the Hamburg Publishing House to be published in the church paper. The article was not accepted for publication, for the brethren felt they lacked clear evidence the experience was from God.

At this time, without knowledge of Mr. Wieck's experience, several other people in various places in Central and Southern Europe also had visions in which they were shown that the blossoming of the stone fruits would mark the close of probation. Elder R. R. Ruhling, an officer of the conference at the time, reports that:

All the visions had the same refrain, that they had been asked to tell this to the leading brethren [in Germany] and if they would reject their message this would mean that they were fallen from grace and that the S.D.A. leaders and churches had become Babylon.—*Ibid.*

Church leaders replied that, with the task which clearly seemed yet before the church, it was unbelievable

that probation would close in just a few months. Soon the "visions" were published privately and circulated widely. As the time passed for the close of probation, other dates were repeatedly set, until the people were weary and disillusioned. Turning their critical attitudes in another direction, these people began an offshoot movement which was to become known as the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement (see *SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 1183-1184).

The Rowen Movement *

Eleven months after the death of Ellen G. White an experience of peculiar and striking character came to Mrs. Margaret W. Rowen, a member of one of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Los Angeles. Some four years before this, Mrs. Rowen had joined the Adventists, coming from the Methodist Church. Her initial visions were soon published in a 32-page

* A request has been made of Arthur White to present in a series of articles the full story of Margaret W. Rowen, to appear at some later time.—*Editors.*



Anna Phillips of Battle Creek, who in 1893 wrote out messages she believed God had given her for the church. Eventually recognizing that these messages were not of God, she repudiated them and became a trusted, fruitful Bible instructor in the work of the church. (See Review, June 8, 1967, p. 4.)

pamphlet. The closing paragraphs of the preface are informative:

This little sketch is set forth by the author, who earnestly believes that God has not only led her mind in the study of His word, but that to her had been given, since June 22, 1916, visions of coming events upon the earth, and views of the world to come. Many people have seen her in the vision state, in which she has received the views here presented, and can testify as to her condition being an entirely unnatural one.

May the readers of this little tract rejoice to know that God has in these last days again chosen a mouthpiece through whom He speaks to His people. And may it be the means, under Him, of leading souls into a closer walk with the Master.—*A Stirring Message for This Time*, p. 3.

A number of witnesses have attested the physical condition of Mrs. Rowen while in vision. One, an Adventist from her girlhood and one who was acquainted with Elder and Mrs. White and others of the pioneers, reports that in 1917 as she went to the home of Mrs. Rowen she found her in vision, with "hands folded across her breast and wide-open, unwinking eyes looking upward." And she reports, "There was no breathing, as far as we could tell, and the body was rigid. . . . Afterwards she told us what she had seen." Quite largely on the basis of these unusual physical manifestations, this eyewitness was convinced of the genuineness of Mrs. Rowen's experience.

Awaiting Further Developments

The matter, of course, came early to the attention of the executive committee of the Southern California Conference, and our members and churches were advised that "it would be well to await further developments before expressing judgment in the matter." The promise was made that leaders of the church would consider the developments and would keep the churches informed.

The alleged visions continued, and the reports of what was revealed began to furnish clues by which the matter might be examined and a determination made. In February, 1917, the Pacific Union Conference committee was drawn into the consideration of the matter, and they in turn appointed a subcommittee of able men to make investigation and offer counsel. On February 21, 1917, four

of these men, Elders I. H. Evans, W. C. White, E. E. Andross, and M. M. Hare, visited Mrs. Rowen and her assistant, Mrs. McCausland, "to secure as full information as possible with reference to the manifestations, . . . the circumstances connected with them, as well as their character, etc." The committee felt that such an investigation was in full harmony with the counsel given to us:

Let no messages be proclaimed until they have borne a careful scrutiny in every jot and tittle. . . . In our work no side issues must be advanced until there has been a thorough examination of the ideas entertained, that it may be ascertained from what source they have originated."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 229.

On February 24, 1917, the executive committee of the Southern California Conference issued a formal statement on the matter. From this we quote at some length:

For some time Mrs. M. W. Rowen has been convinced that the Lord has called her to stand as His special representative, having spoken to her by His angel in holy vision. It is claimed that quite a number of messages, varied in their nature, have been communicated in this manner. . . . These communications are of a more or less general nature, and in some cases quite indefinite in their application.

While a casual review might suggest to some a similarity to the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, yet upon a more critical analysis this is not apparent, only to such extent as quotations are made directly from that source and instruction given which seems to be more or less a repetition of thoughts and ideas which are to be found in a much more forceful and impressive setting in those writings. The most recent communications purport to be more definitely prophetic than some of the earlier ones, suggesting the imminence of a famine, with counsel to lay up nonperishable foods; also a warning to come back from the sea and to leave the cities, although the application of these statements seems quite conjectural.

The report then presents conclusions and sounds a warning:

We feel it our duty to communicate to our people the results of our investigation thus far. Our findings, in harmony with those of the subcommittee appointed to advise with us after their investigation, compel us to state that *as yet we have failed to establish such facts as would constitute in our minds conclusive evidence of the divine origin of these manifestations*, or justify our consenting to their being thus presented to our people.

We have no disposition, however, to enter into controversy with or to pronounce judgment upon those directly connected with them. So far as we know, these sisters are endeavoring to live a humble, Christian life and to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. *But such facts, in themselves, constitute no final evidence as to the spirit at work*, nor do any others connected with its manifestation, in so far as they have come to our notice. While, on the other hand, the messages submitted contain statements apparently out of harmony with the general instruction of both the Word and the teachings of the Spirit of Prophecy as recognized by this denomination.

The reference to an approaching famine counsels our people to such a course of action, in laying up a supply of nonperishable food, as appears to be distinctly opposed to the positive instructions contained in *Early*

Writings. Should we accept these messages as being of divine origin, urging our people to follow the counsel given therein, and it later develops that they are not of God, it seems to us that no greater reproach could possibly come to our cause than would follow such a course.

If they be of God, then we feel assured that He will not leave us in uncertainty, but will give indisputable and *conclusive evidence* of their origin.—*Claims Disproved*, pp. 2-4. (Italics supplied.)

With this clear statement most Seventh-day Adventists in Southern California were content to let the matter rest, awaiting further developments. There were a few, however, who had enthusiastically accepted Mrs. Rowen's claims on evidence that seemed to the committee to be quite insufficient. As Mrs. Rowen and her friends pressed her claims upon the members of our churches, it was necessary for the leaders to make a public

statement at the Southern California camp meeting held in August, 1917. The historical record reveals that:

Elder A. G. Daniells [then president of the General Conference] made a public statement concerning the developments in the case, assuring all that as yet we had no evidence that would lead us to the conclusion that Mrs. Rowen was divinely called to exercise the prophetic gift. Assurance was given that the most careful consideration would be given to her claims, that her writings would be studied by members of the General Conference Committee, and that during the year to come no agitation of the question would be made.—*Ibid.*, p. 5.

Mrs. Rowen was present and publicly agreed to what was said. Her activities, however, continued.

Then the next year at the camp meeting, Elder Daniells made another public statement in which he assured the people that "careful investigation had been made of all the communications of Mrs. Margaret W. Rowen

The art of living

By MIRIAM WOOD

when you're Young

CHURCH LEADERS—A letter I received a few weeks ago has provided me with a great deal to think about. Since the problem my correspondent discussed seems to me to possess a distinct universality, I'd like to talk about it in this column. Here it is:

Should church members who don't subscribe to generally accepted standards of the church be put into positions of leadership? Flatly stated like that, the problem, I'll agree, can be answered simply and clearly, so it seems. Remember, though, that situations are seldom one-dimensional—and, of course, my correspondent didn't state it flatly at all; she stated "her" case with much emotion and at great lengths. Let me start at the beginning, if I can find the end of the tangled thread and untie some of the snarls.

That the church is a place for sinners is indisputable. Christ came, you know, "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." No sin, no Saviour. No need of a Saviour. So it seems to me that the sinner, in recognizing his need, inevitably and sincerely is drawn to a group of people who are in the same situation. If such a thing as a group of perfect people existed, a sinner would hardly feel entirely comfortable with them.

So, then, picture a group of self-recognized sinners, held together by their belief in Christ and their desire to attain to the high standards which are opening before their eyes. Now the word "repentance" comes into the picture rather forcibly—the thing that Christ called the sinners *to* or *do*. And certainly there can be little argument about what is involved in true repentance. (You've heard

of "alligator tears," haven't you? They're shed only when you're very sorry—for being caught!) Let us assume that a sinner forsakes his sins, in genuine repentance, as rapidly as God's grace and his own will power enable him to do so. This brings us to the next point—that there are stages in every church.

By "stages" I mean that some people in the church have been "working" at perfection (and please don't misunderstand my use of the word) for a long time. Some have *been* there a long time but haven't been doing any noticeable "working." Some people have just barely entered the doors, and they haven't had an extended opportunity to scrutinize themselves. Interestingly enough, though, the latter group may be on a pretty good stage if they're still suffused with the rich and soul-satisfying experience of conversion.

You just can't generalize, however. Each person is different. Each person's Christian growth proceeds at a pace influenced by so many elements—capacity to receive spiritual light, inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil, ability to withstand discouragement, degree of sincerity. Well, these are merely a few of the elements that influence one's Christian development.

Certainly, though, it is obvious that no one is in a position to criticize anybody else in the group. The issues are never so simple as they appear on the surface. You'd hardly rail at a baby because he was unable to master calculus, would you?

We'll continue our discussion of this topic next week.

that had come to the hands of the members of the General Conference Committee. He said that it was the unanimous conclusion of these brethren that the communications signed by Mrs. Rowen were not divinely inspired."—*Ibid.*

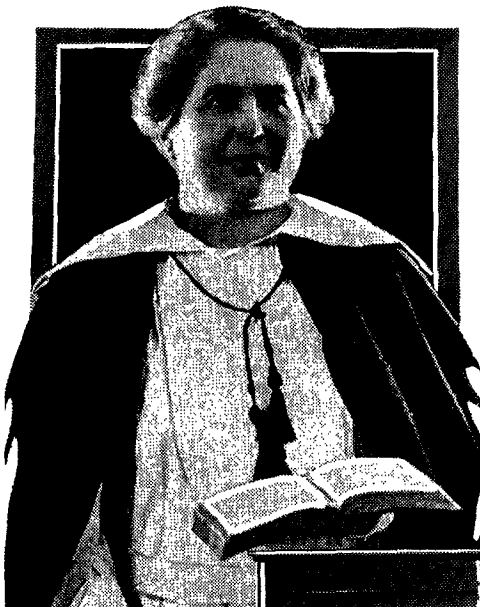
A Clear Decision

Two years and more had passed since the first alleged vision had been received by Mrs. Rowen. Cautiously the brethren awaited developments which would furnish "clear evidence" as to the source of the unusual experience. They failed to find such evidence. Now they were clear in their pronouncements. But this was not the end of the story. The issues were to intensify and rage for another eight years, and not a few precious souls were lost.

An organization was formed by Mrs. Rowen and her associates, taking the name, "The Los Angeles, California, Seventh-day Adventist Reform Church," and a publication was launched carrying the title, "*The Reform Advocate and Prayer-Band Appeal*." Some misled Seventh-day Adventists even channeled their tithes and offerings to the treasury of this organization.

Mrs. Rowen early presented a very strange account concerning her parentage, as she alleged was revealed to her in "vision." This constituted to her adherents the supreme evidence that she was indeed called by God for her special work. It furnished a plausible explanation for her being the recipient, from time to time, of quite large sums of money for her personal use. Her mother and brothers disclaimed the parentage story, and investigations made after the movement collapsed revealed that the "personal gifts" were in actuality tithe funds and gifts to the cause, which never reached the treasury of the "Reform Church."

With Seventh-day Adventist leaders warning our churches against her teachings and claims, Mrs. Rowen in her desperation to secure recognition, stooped to forgery. This was in the form of a statement she composed and to which she signed the name of Ellen G. White. On November 11, 1919, this supposed testimony, which authorized Mrs. Rowen as Mrs. White's successor, was surreptitiously placed by one of her agents in the Ellen G. White manuscript files. The forgery was so poor that none need be deceived, yet not a few accepted this supposed testimony when found as certain evidence that Mrs. Rowen was called of God, and that her messages, which continued to pour forth, emanated from the same mind which inspired the writings of Ellen G. White. Falsehood followed falsehood



The only known picture of Margaret W. Rowen, who in 1915 claimed the prophetic office. Events proved her claims to be false.

and forgery followed forgery in the ensuing six years.

The climax to Mrs. Rowen's work came as the result of the alleged vision given to her sometime in 1923, that probation for the world would close on February 6, 1924, and Christ would come to this earth on February 6, 1925. This then became the burden of the message of the Reform group. By now they had little companies of followers here and there across the land. There were not a large number in any one place, but a few families here and there. As the time of the expected advent neared, many sold their homes and their furniture to have funds to hasten the proclamation of the stirring message.

As the February 6, 1924, date for the

close of probation passed, the missionary operations of the group went strangely on about as usual. Many reassuring messages of the second advent on February 6, 1925, were received by Mrs. Rowen. On October 4, 1924, she was instructed:

Your God Jesus, the Son of the living God, will start from heaven and will be seen by the saints after midnight of February 6, 1925.

The public press gave considerable publicity to the "Reformed Adventists" and their expectation that all time would close on February 6, 1925. Often such accounts were accompanied by denials from Seventh-day Adventist leaders that this was part of the work of the church.

The day February 6, 1925, finally came, but Jesus did not come. Mrs. Rowen disappeared for a time, but soon appeared and conveyed to her believers the assurance given to her in vision that Jesus had left heaven, but the journey to earth had taken longer than she understood that it would. The passage of each day brought discouragement to those who had sacrificed all and staked their hopes on her visions, and disintegration quickly followed.

These events opened the eyes of her close associate, the editor of *The Reform Advocate*, and he published an issue of the journal repudiating Mrs. Rowen and her teachings. Shortly thereafter she attempted to take his life, and as the result was sentenced to a prison term. This she served, but in time was free and endeavored unsuccessfully to rally her forces.

Jesus says: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:15, 16).

(Continued next week)

Your Denominational IQ

By IDAMAE MELENDY



True or False: Answers on page 30.

1. Of the eight associate secretaries of the General Conference elected in 1966, six were elected to this position for the first time, as follows: David Baasch, R. R. Frame, C. O. Franz, A. E. Gibb, D. W. Hunter, H. D. Singleton.
2. Kenneth H. Emmerson and O. A. Blake are assistant treasurers of the General Conference.
3. Of the 12 secretaries of departments of the General Conference, five were newly elected at the 1966 session, as follows: Charles B. Hirsch, Educational; Ralph Waddell, Medical; N. R. Dower, Ministerial; D. A. McAdams, Publishing; J. J. Aitken, Radio-TV.
4. M. V. Campbell, Theodore Carcich, R. S. Watts, and Neal C. Wilson are general vice-presidents of the General Conference.
5. General field secretaries are E. L. Minchin, C. E. Moseley, Jr., C. J. Nagele, E. W. Pedersen.

Testing Later Claims To Special Illumination

By ARTHUR L. WHITE

MRS. MARGARET ROWEN, referred to last week, as sad as her story may be, was not the last to bring to Seventh-day Adventists the claim to special illumination from heaven. The year 1927 and her prison term marked the end of her influence.

Two years later, Victor Houteff, a Seventh-day Adventist layman residing in southern California, began a work which came to be known as the Shepherd's Rod movement. While he never laid claim to having received visions, he did claim special divine illumination, and his writings were considered by those who followed him into the Davidian Seventh-day Adventist Church as being inspired. It was said by those close to him that the light came in the form of impressions upon his mind.

His claims and teachings, when carefully examined by competent leaders of the church, were found to come short of the Bible tests. They conflicted with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy teachings. When clear-cut conflicts between Mr. Houteff's writings and the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy were pointed out, his supporters asserted that while the Lord had not given light to Sister White on the particular point, He had given such light to Brother Houteff. Somehow these people overlooked the Bible-enunciated principle that a fountain does not at the same place send forth "sweet water and bitter." They were blind to the fact that the Spirit of God does not give one message to one person and a conflicting message to another. Such marks the work of the enemy, not of God.

After insidiously making its way for nearly thirty years, this offshoot movement, with its leader dead and its prophecies having failed, came to nought, but not until several hundred men and women, who had walked with Seventh-day Adventists but had been bewitched by the critical message and the claims of special light from heaven, lost their way, and many of them their money and their souls also.

Fifteen years ago in one of the overseas divisions of the work of the church a relatively new convert

claimed that God was giving her visions. The writer, while visiting this division, was requested by the president of the union mission in which this woman resided to participate with him in the examination of her experience and the visions, to ascertain their genuineness. This sister was sending out messages to some of the church members, some of which reached our college in that field. Her writings were being read in some of our churches, and she was asked to speak in some of them in the vicinity of her home. Some of our ministers were convinced of the validity of her claims, and a number of our church members were favorably inclined.

This sister and her husband, who was a planter, resided some 400 miles from the mission headquarters where I was scheduled for three evening meetings and where we would meet her.

Her so-called visions had been neatly reproduced in handwritten and typewritten form and were bound up in little packages of ten to twenty pages each, with sheets 8½ inches wide and 5½ inches high. These were called "books" and were numbered. There were 11 or 12 in all. We had opportunity to scan some of these. Most of the visions could be presented in half a page in typewritten form. Some of them took two or three pages.

We were clear that before we could form an opinion we must talk with this sister, and then apply the Bible tests which have been set before us by which to evaluate the claims of one who says he speaks for God. We read some of the visions in advance of our interview with her.

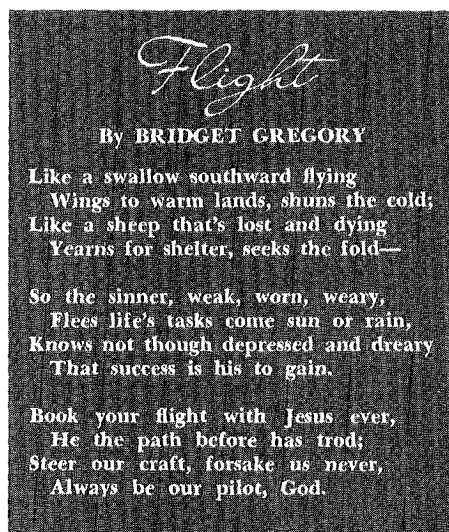
The Subject Matter of the Visions

In one of the visions that came to her early in her experience it seemed to her that she stood before a field of grain on a hillside in which weeds were growing. She was instructed by the Lord that it was her task to remove the weeds that the grain might stand pure and clean. This she did. Then the scene quickly changed, and it seemed to her that she was in a boat going rapidly down a river in which were many whirlpools and rapids. The occupants of the boat represented the church. A great dragon was thrashing about in the water. She was instructed that she must get out and carry the boat to a place of safety. This she did. Then there were scenes of light and glory, and the vision was over.

In another of her visions it was shown to her that her words were like drops of candy which, as she spoke, were being scattered among the people, who scrambled around, picking them up and consuming them. These brought blessings to their hearts.

In another of her visions it seemed to her that she was cleaning house preparatory for the Sabbath. She had swept quite a pile of dirt to the middle of the living room floor, when upon looking up she saw her pastor, who had stepped in. He said, "Why, sister, do you not know that this is the Sabbath?" She had not realized that the hour was so late. He counseled that it would be better for her to leave the pile of dirt in the middle of the floor through the Sabbath than to complete her task of cleaning on God's holy time. Then in this setting she was shown that God's children should, on Friday, the preparation day, partake of their evening meal in time so that the dishes could be washed before the arrival of the hours of the Sabbath.

In another vision she was shown



the number of the redeemed, but instructed not to make that number known to anyone. The information was for her alone. In one early vision she was shown that the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church would not accept her messages and that they would make it very difficult for her, but she was not to lose courage; she was to persevere and go forward with the task of presenting the light God gave her.

In a number of her visions the lax spiritual condition of Seventh-day Adventists was revealed to her somewhat symbolically, by women wearing garments without sleeves, presumably indicating that such persons were not virtuous. Women with sleeveless gowns appeared in a number of the visions.

In one of the visions she was shown that a certain young man with whom she was acquainted, who was taking the theological course at our college in that field, was engaged to be married to a young woman whom she saw in vision wearing a garment without sleeves. The angel said to her, "Now this young woman does not actually wear a garment without sleeves, but she is pictured to you in this way so that you may understand her character." A letter was written to this young man at the college, and he broke off his engagement on the basis of this testimony. The young woman, in shame because of the experience, left the college and returned to her home.

The Sister and Her Unusual Experience

As we met this woman at our mission headquarters, we found her to be perhaps 45 years of age, cultured, well dressed, and well mannered. She did not have a wild look in her eye, but was pleasing in her demeanor. We learned that she was a much-respected lay sister, one who had been a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for about four years.

As we talked with her we learned that she was born and reared in a Roman Catholic home and that the visions had first come to her when she was eight years of age and a Roman Catholic. A little later, in her search for truth and light, she had accepted spiritism, and the visions continued. In the visions she was told that the Sabbath is God's rest day, and was directed to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She became a Sabbathkeeper, and the visions continued.

When asked what took place while she was in vision, she replied she really did not know. She said that the visions were usually given to her at dawn, when she was alone. I told her that I did not want her to give me the number of the redeemed, but I asked

if she at that moment knew the number. She said that she did, for it had been revealed to her in a vision.

Testing the Visions

When asked if she understood that her visions were for the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the world, she assured us that they were. Then we reminded her that not all Seventh-day Adventists live in the tropical belt where the sun rises and sets about six o'clock. In fact, in the far north we have Seventh-day Adventists in an area where in midwinter the Sabbath begins about noon and ends about noon. I asked,

The Wayside Pulpit

By HARRY M. TIPPETT

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Luke 12:34.

The disciples of Jesus were astonished when He said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:23). The Jews had for generations believed that rich men were favorites of Heaven, for had not the counsel come to them in the days of their pilgrimage, "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deut. 8:18)?

Was it not logical to assume, then, that the possession of wealth was evidence of the smile of Heaven upon its possessor? This conclusion was so ingrained in their thinking that when Job's calamities came upon him his three comforters could think of no reason for his misfortune other than that the frown of God was upon him for unconfessed sin.

Yet when Zacchaeus was converted by the radiance of the persuasive grace and humility of Christ, the first movement of his conscience was in regard to his wealth, which he had gained largely by extortion. He pledged to restore fourfold that which he had robbed from his victims. The smile of Heaven came upon him when he disposed of his ill-gotten riches.

The idea still persists even among enlightened Christians that material possessions are a sign of God's favor. When men of wealth place all they possess on the altar, we cannot deny that Heaven approves. But riches as such have often been a curse to men and a continuing source of spiritual blindness to many.

The whole matter is resolved in the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus when he saw the Master blessing the children. "Good Master," he cried, "what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17).

"Now, is it your understanding that Seventh-day Adventists in this area must have their evening meal on the preparation day before the setting of the sun, and wash the dishes before the sun sets?" This was a question she could not answer. She had not thought of that.

The topic selected for the meeting that was to be held that evening was "Prophets True and False." This woman's experience was making considerable stir in this area, and not a few in our local mission were undecided in regard to her. After the meeting the union president and I studied and prayed and worked together. Out of

This young man's concept of goodness was on the human plane. Merit with Heaven was on the computer plan, gold and silver stars on a placard in recognition of good deeds done. He was an exemplary young man, a church boy from his youth up. He no doubt rigidly observed all the 600 rabbinical rules for Sabbathkeeping. He probably had his gardeners tithe the mint, anise, and cummin of his fields. He conceivably was among the wealthy who cast much into the treasury the day Jesus commended the woman who put in two mites. "Then Jesus beholding him loved him" (Mark 10:21).

Here was great potential. Here was another possible writer of the gospel story, a Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. Here was perhaps a second Philip the evangelist, who could win for God men of high estate. Here was a future Paul, or perhaps a martyr from the Roman arena. But his weakness was in regard to the first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). The test on that very point was in regard to his possessions. They had not been consecrated to God's service. And Jesus knew it.

Then, like Judas who wavered in indecision in the banquet chamber of the Last Supper only to hasten out to his Lord's betrayal, this rich young churchman turned away sorrowful into spiritual darkness, for his heart's treasure was in material things.

Many treasures aside from riches may threaten our spiritual security—education and talent, professional standing and rank, a proud genealogy and family crest, political eminence and power. All of them count for nothing as merit in the kingdom of heaven, not a single one, except as we bring them all to the altar of dedication to God's glory.

our work came a statement that we felt we should take to the local conference committee the first thing in the morning. If they felt free to adopt it, it would become the basis of our dealing with the sister whose experience we were examining.

In our analysis of the case we did not attempt to discover the source of her experience. That we left alone. We did point out that the fact that she had had these visions when she was a Roman Catholic and later a spiritist, should lead us to be alert and cautious. We placed in the report a warning quoted in our first article:

There will be those who will claim to have visions. When God gives you clear evidence that the vision is from Him, you may accept it, but do not accept it on any other evidence; for people are going to be led more and more astray in foreign countries and in America.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 72.

Then we turned to an examination of her work and her experience. We pointed out that in these visions there was little said about God and Jesus Christ and the Word of God, but this sister became the focal point of the vision. It was she who was to pull out the weeds and purify the field; it was she who spoke words which were like candy to the people to pick up and eat. Thus the emphasis was on her rather than on Jesus Christ and upon God the Father. We pointed out that there was a mingling of the ridiculous and the common, and brought in the following E. G. White statement, now found in *Selected Messages*, book 2, also quoted earlier:

I am sorry that any of our brethren and sisters are ready to take up with these supposed revelations, and imagine they see in them the divine credentials. These things are not of the right character to accomplish the work essential for this time. Childish figures and illustrations are employed in describing sacred, heavenly things, and there is a mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous. While the work has an appearance of great sanctity, it is calculated to ensnare and mislead souls.—Page 89.

Messages That Meet a Real Need

We pointed out that when God gives light for His people, it is to fit their needs, and that the vision concerning the sanctity of the Sabbath and the preparation of the evening meal on Friday before the Sabbath would not fit the circumstances of the lands in the far north. We pointed out that there was no great message for the church at large, but that the visions dealt mostly with small things and local situations. There was nothing with which to meet a crisis or to settle difficulties among the brethren in the churches. As we discussed this phase with her, she told us that she was shown that when she got to Book Thirteen she would have such a message.

This was the report we brought to the committee. The mission committee met at seven in the morning, studied and accepted the statement as their own, thus placing the mission on record as not endorsing these visions. This sister was counseled that she should not ask to speak in our churches. We counseled that the churches should not ask her to address them. We urged her to put this experience out of her life and forget it and turn her interests to heralding the message of the soon coming of the

Saviour. We pointed out that we could not accept the message as one from God for His church.

After the mission committee accepted the statement, we called in the sister and read it through to her. The fact that we did not accept her as a prophet came as a great shock to her. Our counsel to her was to remain at the mission headquarters over the weekend and to pray and study and worship with the brethren.

One factor that helped to convince was something that took place in the

The art of living

By MIRIAM WOOD

when you're Young

CHURCH LEADERS—2 Last week we were discussing a letter from a reader in which she asked whether leadership positions in the church could be held by persons who don't subscribe to generally accepted church standards. She felt that if a person is qualified by ability, it should make no difference about the "man-made rules," as she termed them. She felt strongly that exclusion from leadership was a vicious and cruel type of discrimination—even a kind of persecution.

As far as discrimination goes—well, it shouldn't "go" at all, especially if it's rooted in self-righteousness or a feeling of personal superiority. Any "drawing aside of one's robes" or "looking down one's nose" or "sitting in the scorner's seat" (I've always been intrigued and mystified by that term) is incredibly—well, incredible! Who's to say who's "better" than someone else? Such an attitude is just about the epitome of non-Christianity, be the possessor of it a long-time Christian or a very new one.

But—and here my correspondent may not like what I'll say—I really can't agree that exclusion from leadership represents discrimination, criticism, or persecution. It represents, rather, a coming to terms with reality, which surely is necessary for any group, be it religious, secular, or political.

The great doctrinal principles of Adventism are not what we're talking about. We'll have to assume that we believe *those*—so let's term those "God's Rules" and place them in Category 1.

In Category 2, let's place the "man-made rules" to which my correspondent referred so bitingly. I'll agree that very often some of them are unpalatable. But every organization has its rules, doesn't it? If you join a group, you'd expect, I should think, to line up. Every country has its rules; when you're a mere tourist there, you're not exempt, and for excellent reasons. (When we were driving in

Italy several years ago we carried a little triangular sign in our car, to be placed in the road in case of emergency. This was a rule of that country. It never occurred to us to fight it.)

There's nothing intrinsically repugnant about rules being made by human beings. After all, our world is composed of rational beings. They're in charge. Rarely does God find it necessary to work through supernatural means; His chosen means are, by and large, men. Not perfect men, and I'll agree they make mistakes and sometimes their judgment is faulty—but so is mine. In fact, my *individual* judgment is likely to be more faulty than the *collective* judgment of my sincere brethren.

My correspondent, of course, mentioned forcibly that God looks "on the heart," and this is undeniably true. But that's just the point! If we want to be respected by our peers we'll have to realize that they *can't* see our hearts; they can judge only by what they see.

Now, I'm not proposing that a person should do all the "right" things for the somewhat unworthy purpose of being thought of as "leadership material." But I *am* saying that intrinsic in leadership is *example*. Would you ask a paralyzed person to demonstrate the 100-yard dash? Or a deaf-mute to demonstrate proper singing techniques? My examples are ludicrous, I know. Yet there is a certain element of the ludicrous in placing people in church leadership roles who are so far from being examples of "the brethren" that their very appearance is a negation of many beliefs held in common by the church body.

I can suggest a solution, though. If my correspondent, and others who feel as she does, will lay the whole matter sincerely before Christ in prayer, she and they undoubtedly will find that "lining up" isn't hard at all. Ability and consecration can then produce wonderful results in church work.

evening between our two interviews with this woman. Our brethren had taken the position that if this work was of God they did not want to reject it, and they felt that we should be very cautious in our approach. They were looking for evidence to help them reach a decision.

Unbeknown to most of us, the young woman whose engagement had been broken because of the testimony sent to her fiancé was present with her mother at the evening meeting. The treasurer of the local mission introduced them to the sister who claimed she had seen this young woman at the college in vision, simply as fellow Seventh-day Adventists. There was nothing unusual in their meeting. After they had visited for a few minutes the mother said, "You have had something to do with the experience of my daughter. She is the young woman who was engaged to be married to the young man at the college who broke his engagement because of the testimony you sent."

The matter was received with no comment or change of expression. The women chatted for a few minutes, and then the mother of the daughter turned away to speak to someone else. At this point the woman who earlier had claimed to have seen this young woman in vision remarked, "Oh, yes, you are the young woman that I saw in vision at the college!" But it was ten minutes too late. This, in the providence of God, turned the scales at the critical moment.

Our sister remained over the Sabbath at the mission headquarters, and then returned home. She began to examine her experience in the light of the counsel received at the mission and came to recognize that the visions were not from the Lord. She now declared they were from the devil. She repudiated her past experience and the visions, and she ceased to have visions. She threw herself wholeheartedly into the activities and interests of the church, serving as a lay member, and today enjoys a victorious Christian experience.

(Concluded next week)

THE SABBATH AND THE ADVENT MOVEMENT

(From page 3)

We must first have Creation before Christ's death and resurrection can have meaning. To say that the resurrection is more important than Creation is like saying that the tower of a building is more important than the foundation. That, of course, is folly to say. God set apart the holy

seventh day in remembrance of a certain great event, Creation. Men have set apart another day in honor of another event, and yet by that strange turn of mind that human reason is capable of, multitudes seek to invoke the Sabbath commandment in support of Sunday.

We cannot accept such reasoning. We cannot abandon God's holy Sabbath day, which has more meaning now than it ever had before in the history of man. We keep the Sabbath

to honor the Creator of heaven and earth, to keep bright in our minds the true portrait of our God. We preach the Sabbath as a bulwark against all the heresies that evolution has brought in. We preach the Sabbath in order to quicken our faith and confidence that soon there shall be fulfilled for us God's promise that He will create a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

(Concluded)

THE STRONG APPEAL OF POPULARITY

(Continued from page 1)

by them from those who have little desire to walk with it. But as we review church history we find that this is exactly what happened to the church from its earliest days. We need not, however, dip deeply into ancient history to learn how this was done. We have been the observers of such conformity in our day, and we are seeing an acceleration of that trend.

A striking article appeared some time ago in *Christianity Today* (Nov. 6, 1964) under the title "The Tide of Doubt Inside the Churches." The author writes: "We observe a conformity of the teaching of the Church to the world, and to unregenerate public opinion. The theologians become the 'idealogians' of the spirit of their time; they express the ideas of their time and provide them with a theoretical justification. . . . The theologians work not to christianize humanity but to humanize Christendom." The writer well asks, "If the world is present in the Church, how then will the Church be present in the world?"

Conformity to the Ways of the World

Not only is the church today looking at the world and seeking to adapt its teachings to accord with the current culture, it is looking within its divided parts, which have been warring with one another for lo these many years, and is seriously seeking some basis for unity in Christendom. This call to unity, which is being made on the basis of minimizing differences and maximizing common beliefs and interests, is hailed by great numbers of Protestant liberals as the dawn of a new hope. Even the Roman Catholic Church, which not so long ago seemed to care little about what Protestants thought of her, feeling secure in her "infallibility," is now presenting a different face to her separated brethren, one that is more winning and susceptible to accommodation for the sake of peace and for

the increase of her own power in the world.

More and more, the forces of conformity are gathering strength. Soon the time will come when the voices of dissent and separateness will be silenced, not by appeals to popularity or the persuasiveness of compromise in the interest of peace, but by demand.

We now are free to stand apart and preach our distinctive message to the world. Some may try to persuade us to bend a little here and compromise a little there for the sake of accommodation and favor, but not yet are we forced to do so. If, however, because of the pleasing song of togetherness, we minimize to any extent the special message we have to give to the world, or even hint that it might not be necessary to emphasize some particular aspects of the message, how, then, will we have the moral courage and spiritual power to resist the demands of a united church backed by governmental power in the days ahead as depicted so startlingly in prophecy?

How only can we be shielded from this danger? By recognizing that it exists and constantly being aware of it. By giving heed particularly to the principles that make us a people. By continuous study of our history and the inspired messages that have guided us until now. By asking ourselves wherein we have failed to follow these messages in the past, and how we can keep from failing to heed them now and in the future.

May we, with singleness of purpose, the courage of our convictions, and a constant awareness of the dangers in our pathway, press forward in the task God has committed to us, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. We know that by the grace of God the remnant people will do this, for He has told us so. Will you, my brother and sister—administrator, pastor, teacher, physician, layman—then be among that faithful people?

(Continued next week)

What May We Expect in Days to Come?

By ARTHUR L. WHITE

WITH the genuine gift of prophecy in its midst, the church has been, and still is, the target of persons who may, in all sincerity, believe God has entrusted them with special messages for it. Theoretically, it *could* be within the plan of God again to speak to the church through a living prophet.

The prophet Joel, and the apostle Peter quoting Joel, represent the Lord as declaring that in the last days God will pour out His Spirit, "and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17, 18; cf. Joel 2:28).

We have seen the fulfillment of these words in the experience of Ellen G. White. Beyond this the Lord has not made known to us just what the future may hold, nor has He bound Himself.

The apostle Paul has admonished us: "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:19-21).

Ellen White has counseled:

There will be those who will claim to have visions. When God gives you clear evidence that the vision is from Him, you may accept it, but do not accept it on any other evidence; for people are going to be led more and more astray in foreign countries and in America.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 72.

The church is warned by both the prophets of old and by Ellen G. White to take heed lest we be misled by false prophets. In connection with these warnings, important tests are established by which we may determine the validity of claims to divine enlightenment. Of these there are four. The order in which we may list them is not important, but the tests are vital and all four of them must be brought to bear. To invoke but one or two and omit the others will open the door to deception.

Tests of a True Prophet

1. The fulfillment of the predictions.

The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come

to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him (Jer. 28:9).

The convincing evidence of prophecy fulfilled establishes confidence in the divine origin of the messages presented by the prophet, and of the integrity of the Heaven-chosen messenger. Jesus declared, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe" (John 14:29). In applying this, the most striking test, we must take into account the conditional nature of certain of God's promises and threatenings (see Jer. 18:9, 10; Num. 14:34).

2. Fidelity to the verities of the Christian faith.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God (1 John 4:1-3).

The apostle John foresaw that there would be religious groups claiming God as their Father but denying that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary. The attitude to the verities of the Christian faith of one who would lay claim to be in possession of messages from God would constitute a significant sign of the truthfulness of such claims.

3. Ye shall know them by their fruits.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. . . . A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Matt. 7:15-20).

This test, set before us by Jesus Himself, is particularly useful in judging the work of one who lays claim to special illumination. It is to be expected that the fruit will be good, whether observed in the life of the individual himself, in the lives of those who follow the counsel given, or in enterprises that may thus have been called into being.

4. To the law and the testimony.

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20).

If the special message of one who claims to speak for God does not accord fully with the law of God and the testimony of the prophets we can know for a certainty that the message did not originate in the mind of God. Much that is good may be taught, but if it is tinged with error, this should signal caution. Warned Ellen White in speaking of those who may claim to have special light:

Many things in these visions and dreams seem to be all straight, a repetition of that which has been in the field for many years; but soon they introduce a jot here, a tittle of error there, just a little seed which takes root and flourishes, and many are defiled therewith.—*Ibid.*, p. 87.

The Crowning Test

This may be considered the crowning test, and it is not difficult to apply. Miracles may attend the claims to prophetic insight, but such evidences of themselves may not be trusted. This is the test Christ Himself imposed. How does the work accord with the law and the testimony of the prophets who have gone before? Note that "in the wilderness of temptation Satan came to Christ as an angel from the courts of God. *It was by his words, not by his appearance*, that the Saviour recognized the enemy."—*Review and Herald*, July 22, 1909. (Italics supplied.) Christ could not trust His eyes in reaching a conclusion as to what purported to be a being from heaven. But because the "words" were out of accord with the "testimony" of God's prophets of old, He knew the enemy.

It is well, in applying this test, to observe that the standard is cumulative. The prophets who followed Isaiah in Old and New Testament times, and even Ellen White in our day, contributed to the body of testimony that might be usefully employed:

There will be false dreams and false visions, which have some truth, but lead away from the original faith. The Lord has given men a rule by which to detect them: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

If they belittle the law of God, if they pay no heed to His will as revealed in the testimonies of His Spirit, they are deceivers.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 98.

The reader familiar with the El-

len G. White writings will recognize the phrase "the testimonies of His Spirit" as referring to her writings. Seventh-day Adventists have had an opportunity to apply these tests again and again when there has arisen in our ranks some man or woman who claimed to be especially led by God.

Identifying False Prophets

In addition to the Bible tests, there are certain well-defined evidences that should be brought to bear against the claims of any who say they speak for God.

1. The high spiritual plane of the message is a valuable gauge of the work. Are the themes in keeping with the work of God? Are the teachings and illustrations dignified, or are they cheap and ridiculous? Often in the work of a person who is not a genuine prophet there is a "mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous" and "childish figures and illustrations are employed in describing sacred, heavenly things."—*Ibid.*, p. 89.

2. The timeliness of the message is an important evidence. Does the message meet a situation where it is needed? Often in the experience of Ellen White the messages were indeed miraculously timed, having been sent before the situation had developed, but received just at the crucial moment of need.

3. The practical nature of the messages helps the people to see that God is in the work. Mrs. White's first vision came at the very time it was needed, and was of a character to meet a specific crisis. The Adventists were left in disappointment in 1844. The question was Had God led them or was this the work of the enemy? Her vision given in December brought to them the assurance that God had led His people and would continue to lead them to the heavenly city if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus.

4. The manner in which the visions were given to the prophet, has by some been used as a test. It is rather an evidence among other evidences. The Bible describes the physical phenomena that accompany many of the visions, but these are not set up as a test (see Dan. 10:7-19; Num. 24:3, 4, 15, 16). They have their place in establishing confidence. Ellen White once wrote, in speaking of this: "These messages were thus given to substantiate the faith of all, that in these last days we might have confidence in the spirit of prophecy."—*Review and Herald*, June 14, 1906. But we must remember that Satan can perform miracles; therefore miracles are not a test of divine origin. Note these words:

Let none cherish the idea that special provi-

dences or miraculous manifestations are to be the proof of the genuineness of their work or of the ideas they advocate.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 146.

We have shown that, in the experience of Margaret Rowen, the physical phenomena were, to many, convincing evidence of her claims, even though her work came short as measured by the Bible tests. The physical evidence, convincing as it may be, should be considered only as one evidence among others.

Another factor in this area is the individual selected by God to bear His message. Writing of the visions given in the hours of the night, sometimes spoken of as night visions, Ellen White wrote:

There are many dreams arising from the common things of life with which the Spirit of God has nothing to do. "There are also false dreams as well as false visions, which are inspired by the spirit of Satan. But dreams from the Lord are classed in the word of God with visions and are as truly the fruits of the Spirit of prophecy as visions. Such dreams, taking into the account the persons who have them, and the circumstances under which they are given, contain their own proofs of their genuineness."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 658. (Italics supplied.)

5. The visions were definite experiences. The prophet of God did not simply experience strong impressions. Ellen White, as she arrived at the campground in 1870, walked into a meeting and rebuked the man who was speaking to the congregation, pointing out grievous sin in his life unknown to any in the congregation except the man's brother. She had not met him. She did not know his name. She asked no questions. In vision she had been bidden to bear a certain testimony when she heard a certain voice. When she came to the meeting she recognized the voice. Some who have deep impressions made on their minds confuse the experience, and assume that it is a vision from God. Wrote Ellen White:

Jeremiah preaching. Many preferred to hear the messages of false prophets of the day.

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Various things will appear claiming to be revelations from God, but which flow from the imagination of a conceited and deceived mind.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 90.

6. The prophet of God is not influenced by his contemporaries or by surrounding circumstances. When it was suggested to Micaiah the prophet that a certain message would please the king, who had sent for him to prophesy, he declared, "As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak" (2 Chron. 18:13). He did so at the peril of his life, but only one course was open to him. Regardless of influences, he must give God's message. When it was suggested at one time that Ellen White had been influenced by the brethren, she declared:

You think individuals have prejudiced my mind. If I am in this state, I am not fitted to be entrusted with the work of God.—*Ibid.*, p. 63.

7. Recognition by one's contemporaries is another point of importance. The work, if it is of God, will carry a certain air, the message will have a certain ring, and as it measures up to the tests and evidences the matter stands out clearly as the work of God.

As Anna Phillips in Battle Creek wrote her visions, and Elder A. T. Jones championed Miss Phillips and the visions, there was a good deal of discussion around Battle Creek of the gift of prophecy and of those who may have it. From across the waters in Australia Ellen White wrote:

From time to time reports come to me concerning statements that Sister White is said to have made but which are entirely new to me. . . . A sister, in a letter to her friends, speaks with much enthusiasm of a statement by Brother Jones that Sister White has seen that the time has come when, if we hold the right relation to God, all can have the gift of prophecy to the same extent as do those who are now having visions. Where is the authority for this statement?—Letter 6a, 1894.

To Elder Jones she wrote:

You cannot be too careful how you talk of the gift of prophesying, and state that I have said this and that in reference to this matter. Such statements, I well know, encourage men and women and children to imagine that they have special light in revelations from God, when they have not received such light. This, I have been shown, would be one of Satan's masterpieces of deception. You are giving to the work a mold which it will take precious time and wearing soul labor to correct, to save the cause of God from another spasm of fanaticism.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 86. (Italics supplied.)

Seventh-day Adventists face the future with confidence and expectancy. We know not just what may be in store for us, but we know that Christ is our leader and that He will lead us safely. The familiar words ring in our ears:

We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.—*Life Sketches*, p. 196.

(Concluded)